

CPYRGHT



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The Faulk Verdict

John Henry Faulk may never collect much of the \$3,500,000 in damages a State Supreme Court jury has awarded him for the wrecking of his career as a radio and television commentator. But the libel verdict should have a healthy effect in curbing the excesses of super-patriots who sometimes show no more concern for the rights of individuals than the Communists they denounce.

The higher courts will have to review the jury's finding, and even if it is sustained it is doubtful that Mr. Faulk will ever get more than a nominal sum in cash indemnity. However, the case should assist in establishing a judicial delimitation of the lengths to which private groups, arrogating to themselves the mantle of public protectors against subversion, can go in black-listing and defaming their fellow-citizens.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Central Intelligence Agency, the intelligence branches of the armed services and several committees of Congress devote themselves energetically to guarding the nation against Communist pene-

tration. Voluntary educational activities in Communist tactics can often be a helpful supplement to these official functions. But we do nothing to strengthen democracy if Americanism is distorted into a device for undermining the freedom the Constitution guarantees to every American.